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Security Council

Seventy-second year

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Tuesday, 10 October 2017, 10.15 a.m.
New York

President:	Mrs. Gueguen/Mr. Delattre	(France)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Soliz
	China	Mr. Wu Haitao
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	Ethiopia	Ms. Guadey
	Italy	Mr. Lambertini
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Mrs. Haley
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Yemen to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, and Mr. John Ging, Director of the Coordination and Responsive Division of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Mr. Ould Cheikh Ahmed.

Mr. Ould Cheikh Ahmed (*spoke in Arabic*): The parties to the conflict in Yemen are pursuing a futile and cruel military conflict, which is eroding the path to peace. At the same time, the people of Yemen are suffering from an entirely man-made humanitarian catastrophe.

Clashes and exchanges of heavy fire have continued on all major frontlines, including Taiz, Ma'rib, Al Jawf, Al Bayda, Hajjah and Sa'dah governorates, and the Saudi-Yemen border areas. The recent sharp increase in civilian casualties show the parties' continued disregard for the loss of civilian life and their obligations under international humanitarian law. An airstrike against a residential suburb of Sana'a took place on 25 August reportedly resulted in the killing of 14 civilians and the injury of 16 others, and caused further damage to civilian infrastructure.

In Taiz city, shelling of residential areas from zones controlled by Houthi forces and forces loyal to Ali Abdullah Saleh has continued. In two incidents on 15 and 18 September, rocket-fire killed and injured tens of civilians, including eight children. In addition, on 23 September the coalition intercepted a Houthi missile fired towards the Saudi city of Khamis Al-Mushayt. The Houthis' recent threats to expand the firing of ballistic missiles towards other countries in the Gulf region represent a counterproductive escalation of rhetoric.

Resolution 36/31, recently adopted by the Human Rights Council, supports the Yemen National of Inquiry and establishes a group of experts to examine alleged violations and abuses of international human rights and international law. It is a significant sign of the increased engagement of the international community and a step forward towards accountability and reducing future violations.

I have consistently reminded the warring parties of their responsibilities under international humanitarian law and human rights law, including their obligation to stop the recruitment of child soldiers and to end sexual and gender-based violence. Targeting civilians and the destruction of civilian infrastructure are unacceptable.

The conflict is creating a desperate situation in every facet of daily life. The economy is shrinking even further and the use of dwindling State revenues to fund the war continues to hinder the salary payments on which millions of Yemenis depend. There are continuing efforts to reactivate the Central Bank and stabilize the Yemeni economy, as recently discussed in the track-II event held in Germany for the interest of repayment of salaries to Yemeni civil servants, including those in the education and health sectors. This will hopefully decrease the humanitarian and economic strife.

Appproximately 17 million individuals are food insecure, and over one third of the country's districts are now in severe danger of famine. The destruction of infrastructure and the breakdown of public services have fuelled the world's worst outbreak of cholera, which has already killed more than 2,100 individuals and continues to infect thousands each week.

If things remain unchanged, future Yemeni generations will have to suffer and bear the burden of this conflict — including the massive destruction, malnutrition, lack of education and economic deterioration it has caused. In the absence of a political solution, the outlook can only become bleaker. An agreement to end the war is urgently needed so that a new Yemeni unity Government, supported by the international community, can be formed and begin the process of rebuilding the country's economy and State institutions.

I welcome the efforts of the World Bank and UNICEF to mitigate the impact of the economic crisis. The first disbursement of cash assistance to the most vulnerable Yemeni households took place on 20 August. The $400 million programme will reach all of its beneficiaries in the coming weeks and months. The programme is providing vital support to those households and is maintaining a critical safety-net system.

There are no winners on the battlefield in Yemen. The losers are the Yemeni people, for it is they who are suffering from this war. They are getting poorer while their influential leaders are getting richer. These leaders are not interested in finding solutions because in a settlement they will lose their power and control. Nevertheless, the parties have to commit to ending all hostilities and start discussions for a comprehensive peace agreement.

Common ground must be found in order to relieve the effects of conflict, hunger and disease and to increase mutual trust. An agreement that provides for secure access for humanitarian and commercial goods to reach Hudaydah and get distributed to the rest of the country, for the opening of the Sana'a airport and for ensuring more consistent civil-service salary payments will be an essential step in alleviating the humanitarian crisis. However, those steps cannot replace the broad solution we are trying to achieve, which will be a part of a larger comprehensive peace agreement.

To reach such a peace agreement, I held meetings with Yemeni and international officials during the opening week of the seventy-second session of the General Assembly in New York. I continue to be in communication with the parties. I am currently in the process of discussing a proposal that includes humanitarian initiatives to rebuild trust and steps to bring the parties back to the negotiating table. We will discuss the details of this proposal with the Government of Yemen and the alliance of the Houthis and General People's Congress, which have committed to engaging in further discussions on the details of the proposal. We hope that this commitment will translate into action by the parties and that it will deepen their engagement with me with respect to those initiatives, with a view to achieving a peaceful political solution.

The bloodshed and destruction in Yemen has to end. There are no excuses. There are no justifications. People are asking the United Nations to provide a solution for salary-payment issue while others are actively working to hinder talks on the issue as if they able ignore the fact that millions of Yemenis are suffering. Many of the powerful in Yemen benefit from the current conflict at a time when their citizens are facing the worst suffering in the history of the country.

At a time when the gap between the Yemeni people and those in power is growing, the people want this war to end. Yemeni young people, women and civil-society groups are calling for peace, stability and accountability for crimes committed. In the southern governorates, past injustices and calls for greater autonomy remain unaddressed despite the urgent need for them to be addressed. The Yemenis themselves are not without many positive ideas for tackling these issues in a peaceful manner, but the parties need to show greater flexibility and listen to the people. If they do not do so, the fissures in Yemen's political and social fabric will only become wider, thereby increasing the danger of further fragmentation and with it the potential for terrorism.

The United Nations is using all its political, logistical, administrative and advisory capabilities to support the Yemeni cause, but only the warring parties can decide to reach peace. They are the ones who will be held to account for a failure. I reiterate that the only viable path for the future of Yemen is a negotiated settlement. The proposals that I have put forward meet the concerns of both parties. Their implementation would bring real benefits to the Yemeni people.

Finally, I request the Security Council to use all its political and economic power it to apply pressure on all parties to commit to a path of peace. The parties must climb out of their trenches and put an end to hostile rhetoric. Instead of fighting over Yemen, let us cooperate for the best interests of Yemen.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Ould Cheikh Ahmed for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ging.

Mr. Ging: Last month, Yemen entered the third year of its armed conflict with no clear end in sight. The human cost of this conflict has been devastating. Air strikes, shelling and ground fighting continue in urban areas, where civilians are being injured or killed and the critical infrastructure they rely on is being destroyed. The international community has witnessed the devastation in which the Yemeni people now live,

and because of the crisis approximately 15 million people lack adequate access to clean drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, or health services; and about 7 million people are faced with the threat of famine. Worse, all of this has been exacerbated by the largest single-year outbreak of cholera ever recorded. As the conflict continues, some 2 million people remain displaced. They live in crowded, unsafe, unsanitary and undignified spontaneous settlements, where shelters made of rags, cardboard and just about anything their residents can find in the streets are exposed to the elements. The conflict in Yemen remains a man-made crisis, generating intolerable suffering for the Yemeni people.

I take this opportunity to highlight three of the challenges facing the Yemeni people, and humanitarians in particular — humanitarian access and its limitations, the impact of civil-servant-salary interruptions on food insecurity and critical services, and the ongoing risks in commercial access to the country.

Humanitarians face unacceptable obstacles from all sides in carrying out relief efforts in Yemen. The biggest problem is actual prevention of humanitarian access. For example, the authorities in Sana'a regularly deny access and have arbitrarily delayed or denied dozens of requests for humanitarian personnel to enter the country via Sana'a. Furthermore, for several weeks now, humanitarian partners have been reporting a freeze on the issuance of visas by the authorities in Aden for international non-governmental organizations.

Such obstacles are abhorrent in a country where the threat of famine looms over millions, where there are over 800,000 suspected cases of cholera across 90 per cent of communities, and where only 45 per cent of health facilities are functioning. Quite simply, these obstructions cost lives. We hope that the recent commitments made by the parties will translate into giving priority to unfettered humanitarian access.

The interruption of regular salary payments for 1.25 million civil servants is an additional driver of humanitarian need, particularly food insecurity, as affected public employees and their families represent nearly a quarter of the population. Where food is available in markets, people now lack the cash to buy basic necessities. The prices have risen significantly. Recent market analysis puts the average price of a food basket 30 per cent higher than pre-crisis prices, and in some cases as much as 60 per cent higher, despite the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism's facilitating the majority of Yemen's average food requirements each month. The price of cooking gas in Aden and Hudaydah is more than 70 per cent higher than the pre-crisis level. That reality is having a negative effect on the capacity of the population to cope. People are now taking to such acts as selling their assets and taking on debt to buy food.

Children are paying a particularly high price, not least the 460,000 who are severely malnourished. Even if the fighting were to stop today, stunted growth and delayed cognitive development would linger for an entire generation. The loss of livelihoods for adults also means that thousands of children are forced to work rather than go to school, with child marriage rates also increasing as families claim incapacity to support their children.

In addtion, the lack of civil-servant salaries has disrupted the provision of basic services to the wider population. Already stressed critical services are unavailable if employees are not present to operate them, most notably in the health, water and sanitation and education sectors. We seek the support of the Council in finding a way to prioritize salaries for those sectors. It is not difficult to draw a clear link between the near-absent health, water and sanitation services and the unprecedented cholera outbreak.

As the Council is aware, Yemen has long been reliant on the importation of commercial goods to meet its basic food and fuel needs. However, commercial traffic to Yemen, by both sea and air, remains challenging. Any significant decline in imports due to bureaucratic delays risks making the threat of famine a reality. In that regard, we renew our calls for the protection and continued operation of Hudaydah port and for the unconditional instalment of the four World Food Programme mobile cranes. The closure of Sana'a airport to commercial traffic has blocked thousands of Yemenis from travelling for medical care, and students from attending universities abroad. A resumption of commercial flights is urgently and immediately needed. There appears to be no legitimate reason that the inspection mechanism operated by the coalition prior to August 2016 cannot be reinstated.

The Yemen humanitarian response plan is 55 per cent funded, with $1.3 billion of the $2.3 billion required to reach the 12 million people in need of humanitarian support and protection this year. We thank Member

States for their generosity and funding. Despite the complexity of the response, this year humanitarians have already reached 7 million people with direct assistance. We therefore encourage Member States to directly support our efforts and to do more through the response plan. This year, the Yemen Humanitarian Fund has reached $128 million, the largest globally. The Fund was nimble in rapidly responding to the cholera outbreak and famine prevention. Over 21 per cent of the Fund's allocations have gone to national partners. We salute them for their efforts on the front lines of the humanitarian response and, again, we thank donor Member States for their generosity.

As we desperately wait for a political solution and an end to the conflict, we call upon all States to exert their influence on all parties to the conflict to comply with their obligations and responsibilities under international humanitarian law and human rights law. The Human Rights Council's recent adoption by consensus of resolution 36/31 is one example of the influence States can exert. The parties and their supporters need to show greater commitment to finding a political solution. We need the international community to step up its efforts in support of a viable solution that addresses the root causes and restores the hope of the Yemeni people for a better future. They deserve nothing less.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Ging for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Llorentty Soliz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation thanks the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Mr. Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, and the Director of the Operational Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. John Ging, for their briefings. We express our full support for their work.

Despite the numerous pronouncements made by the Security Council on the situation in Yemen, including the presidential statements of 15 June (S/PRST/2017/7) and 9 August (S/PRST/2017/14), and in spite of the repeated calls that the Council has made to the parties with a view to their commitment to a cessation of hostilities and initiation of dialogue to achieve a political solution to the conflict, the situation in the country has not improved, and the humanitarian crisis unfortunately continues to worsen without signs of progress.

Aside from the conflict, which has generated nearly 3 million internally displaced persons, and has left 9.8 million people in urgent need of humanitarian assistance, according to data published on 1 October by the World Health Organization, the cholera outbreak has spread to 96 per cent of governorates in Yemen, causing over 2,000 deaths and possibly infecting 750,000 people, a one third increase over the number reported at our previous briefing, in August (see S/PV.8027), where the figure was around 500,000 people.

Regrettably, the presence of armed groups, checkpoints and indiscriminate airstrikes, especially in the governorates of Al-Yauf, Marib, Sa'ada, Hudaydah and Sana'a, among others, continue to hamper the distribution and deployment of humanitarian assistance, not only because of the transit and transit restrictions that those entail, but because of the high risk that humanitarian workers are subjected to when entering those places, where they have been subject to attacks with firearms on a number of occasions, the origin of which should be a matter deserving of the careful attention by the Council. In that regard, we reiterate to the parties involved in the conflict that they must allow and guarantee the security and integrity of the agencies that provide humanitarian assistance. We also remind them that it is prohibited to identify such agencies as military targets by any reasoning. Moreover, they must ensure the unconditional and unrestricted access of aid to all places where it is needed.

With regard to the food shortage in Yemen, as reported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations last September, 60 per cent of the population lives with food insecurity, and 7 million people are at risk of famine. This situation is aggravated by the fact that 90 per cent of the food staples required by the population to survive are imported. Furthermore, the ports that are currently providing services do not do so in full capacity and are not capable of meeting the demand. In that regard, we call on the parties to ensure the full operation of all ports and routes of access to the same, including the port of Hudaydah and Sana'a airport.

For all of those reasons, we reiterate our call on the Council and the membership in general to maintain a unanimous and firm position in condemning belligerent acts and campaigns that aggravate the crisis in Yemen and that generate the damaging instability that threatens the lives of millions of innocent people.

We also reiterate our call on the parties involved in the conflict to comply with the provisions of resolution 2216 (2015), to commit to a cessation of hostilities and to establish a sustained process of dialogue and negotiation that will allow for a peaceful, inclusive and orderly political transition that meets the demands and aspirations of the Yemeni people, and that is framed in respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Yemen.

Finally, we consider it important to reiterate the request made by the former Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. Stephen O'Brien, to create an independent international body to investigate possible violations of international humanitarian law and human rights, thereby preventing impunity from silencing the voices of the thousands of victims that this conflict has claimed.

Mr. Bermúdez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I should like to thank the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Mr. Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, and to the representative of the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. John Ging, for their briefings. We also thank the French presidency for convening this public briefing.

Uruguay sees no other way to arrive at a solution to the bloody conflict in Yemen except through a Yemeni-led negotiation process in which all parties involved participate in an inclusive, peaceful and democratic manner. There is no military solution to the conflict. Uruguay emphatically urges the parties to return to the negotiating table without preconditions and in good faith and to agree to put an end to the armed conflict in a peaceful way as quickly as possible. On a military basis, none of the contenders will prevail.

Uruguay also calls on the parties to the conflict to fully comply with the cessation of hostilities to facilitate negotiation and as a first step towards establishing peace. They should understand that, if the war were to continue, it would favour the actions of Al-Qaida and Da'esh. Furthermore, those countries that have influence on the parties must cooperate in the search for a peaceful solution to the conflict.

The lack of concrete results in the peace process continues to create suffering for Yemeni civilians, causing great harm every day to the humanitarian situation in Yemen, which is on the verge of collapse, which is aggravated by famine and the outbreak of cholera.

With regard to the humanitarian situation, Uruguay is concerned by the dire situation of civilians, in particular that of the most vulnerable groups, such as women and children. According to a recently published report by Yemen Protection Cluster, led by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, during the first half of 2017 the number of air attacks reported exceeded the total number of air attacks for all of 2016, with a monthly average almost three times greater for the present year. The same phenomenon applies to the data on armed clashes. Civilians are the ones paying the highest price for those acts — with their lives.

Uruguay condemns each and every violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law that are taking place in Yemen. In that connection, we urge all parties to distinguish at all times between the civilian population and the combatants. Civilians are not a target, and humanitarian assistance must be allowed to reach them without restrictions or interruption.

My delegation has spoken on several occasions in the Council about the need for accountability for the serious widespread violations of international humanitarian law committed by all warring parties. We are pleased by the recent adoption by the Human Rights Council of a resolution that provides for the establishment of a panel of experts to monitor the situation of human rights in Yemen, including violations and abuses committed by all the parties to the conflict since September 2014. In that regard, Uruguay calls on the parties, in accordance with the provisions of that resolution, to provide full and transparent access to the international investigative committee and to cooperate with it so that it can fulfil its mandate.

All parties involved in this prolonged conflict have committed war crimes and other serious violations of international law — and continue to do so with total impunity. They must be held accountable before justice for their actions. Accountability is crucial to achieve a lasting settlement to the conflict.

Similarly, Uruguay welcomes and appreciates the annual report (S/2017/821) of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict, as well as the inclusion in the attached list of perpetrators of serious violations against children in Yemen.

Finally, allow in particular to thank the Special Envoy for his work and reiterate our strong support to him. We are also grateful for the continuous work

carried out by humanitarian workers and agencies in Yemen, who are trying to help millions of persons under extremely difficult conditions.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Yemen.

Mr. Alyemany (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): I extend to the Security Council a greeting of peace on behalf of the people of Yemen, who aspire to peace.

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your excellent leadership of the Security Council for this month. I would also like to express our great gratitude to you, Sir, for giving us this opportunity to speak before the Council today. We would like to express our gratitude to the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed for the great efforts they are undertaking. The Yemeni Government fully supports their efforts aimed at achieving at a sustainable peace agreement that would put an end to the coup against the Yemeni State and end the war that has been waged by the Houthi-Saleh coalition against our people since September 2014.

The Council meets today two weeks after a great deal of activity at the United Nations following the opening of the seventy-second session of the General Assembly. The Republic of Yemen participated in the opening of the session with a high-level delegation, led by His Excellency President Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi Mansour. The meetings and dialogues held with various senior United Nations officials, as well as Security Council member States, with regard to the situation in Yemen were especially important. The primary message of those meetings can be summarized in the willingness of the Yemeni Government to immediately meet the requirements for sustainable peace and in order to put an end to the war in Yemen under the auspices of the United Nations and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Yemen.

However, we cannot put an end to the war and achieve peace unilaterally. On the contrary, putting an end to the war requires the acceptance by the coup party to return to the negotiating table and to accept the elements of peace, as well as the terms of reference, in order to put an end to the suffering of our patient Yemeni people.

The opening of the seventy-second session of the General Assembly coincided with the three-year anniversary of the war, which is being waged by the Houthi/Saleh coalition against the people of Yemen. The war runs contrary the national consensus, embodied in the initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council and its means of implementation, and the outcomes of the National Dialogue for a peaceful political transition in Yemen, which was adopted under the auspices of the United Nations and with the blessing of the Security Council. The Security Council held an extraordinary meeting in Sana'a in January 2013 in order to support the aspirations of the Yemeni people towards building a democratic federation based on justice, equality, human rights and good governance.

Three years have passed since the Houthi/Saleh coup d'état — the greatest catastrophe ever witnessed by Yemen — began, and the miserable circumstances in my country are apparent. The coup has displaced millions of Yemeni people, inside and outside Yemen. It has killed tens of thousands of Yemeni citizens and it continues to indiscriminately shell the heroic city of Taiz. It has caused the spread of cholera and turned Sana'a into an enormous prison detaining thousands of Yemen's best citizens in terms of thinkers, academics, students and journalists, not to mention the fact that children are being recruited. The coup has demolished the homes of its opponents and has changed the educational curriculums in line with a narrow, dynastic, religious perspective that proclaims a divine right to govern the population without observance of the principles of democracy and pluralism in which we all believe.

Three years after the beginning of this human suffering, which is unprecedented in the history of Yemen, all observers can see that the Houthi/Saleh alliance is exploiting the security, stability, sovereignty and humanitarian situation in Yemen. The spread of health-related disasters is being used in a strategy of precariousness hatched by Tehran in the context of its expansionist view of the region and carried out with the Houthi tentacles in Yemen. In Yemen we can either accept the rule of the Houthi militias and the imposition of a Hizbullah-like model or face death and destruction. as well as the spread of instability and tension in the region.

The Houthi-Saleh alliance continues to usurp authority. According to the final report of the Panel of Experts established in accordance with resolution 2266 (2016), that alliance has looted 70 per cent of the State's resources (see S/2017/81). It rejects the peace initiatives that have been submitted and presented by

the Special Envoy to the Secretary-General on Yemen in Geneva and Kuwait, the most recent of which was the Hudaydah initiative, which was welcomed by the Yemeni Government and discussed in detail by the President during his meetings in New York. What cannot be disputed is that the Houthis do not have the political will to directly engage with the requirements for peace in Yemen. The political will of the Houthis is being held hostage by outside forces that do not hope for security and stability in Yemen or the region.

The Yemeni Government continues to believe that war cannot be the means by which the Yemeni crisis will be settled. As everyone knows, the Yemeni Government did not resort to taking up arms when the Houthi militias controlled Sana'a. The Government has made concessions in order to arrive at the controversial Peace and National Partnership Agreement, which was rejected by the party responsible for the coup. That party then hijacked the State, thinking that they would get away with it by killing the State's leadership and its opponents and burying the initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the results of the National Dialogue Conference, which all Yemenis agreed to. The attendance and participation of the party that carried out the coup in all the rounds of negotiation in the past were simply maneuvers used in order to gain time and impose a criminal scheme that aims to destroy Yemen and assault neighbouring States. That is all within an agenda that is being carried out by Iran in order to spread tension and destabilize the region by creating tension and fabricating conflicts, which fuel sectarian violence and swell feelings of hatred. Such actions spread violence and chaos within the region.

Sustainable peace will not be achieved if Iran does not stop interfering in Yemen's affairs and in the affairs of the region. The world must today take a collective stand in order to reign in Iran's expansionist greed. The experience of the Ayatollah's oppressive regime, which was rejected by the Iranian people, cannot be imposed on Yemen. The terms of reference for peace in Yemen, which are embodied in the initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the outcome of the National Dialogue Conference and the relevant Security Council resolutions, include the necessary elements to guarantee a sustainable solution to the Yemeni crisis. Moreover, resolution 2216 (2015) is gaining more strategic importance with time. The framework of reference for the international community is growing, along with the unified position of the Security Council regarding the Yemeni crisis. It strongly confirms that any sustainable solution to the Yemeni crisis can be based only on the withdrawal of the militias responsible for the coup and the return of power to the State, as well as the handing over of weapons and rockets of the State. Only the State should be in possession of weapons.

Before the General Assembly, President Hadi said that the rockets targeting the territories of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as well as those that the militias have threatened to use against the territories of the United Arab Emirates, which have a range of over 600 kilometres, are Iranian rockets (see A/72/PV.11). He said that they are distinct from the rockets that are in the possession of the Yemeni army.

The Yemeni Government has limited capabilities and is undergoing a very complicated situation. Additionally, it faces great challenges in the economic, security and services sectors because of the war and the destruction that it has wrought on all facets of daily life. Yemen is in dire need of international assistance in order to support its own efforts to entrench peace and security and activate services in the liberated areas, commence reconstruction and remedy security breaches. It must also continue with its efforts to combat terrorism. Yemen continues to need support, due to the levels of poverty and the lack of food security, especially in areas that are being shelled on a daily basis by the militias, such as the besieged city of Taiz, which has been under siege for over two and a half years. In the governorates under control of the coup forces, there is a dire humanitarian situation, as a result of the rebels' refusal to pay wages to employees of the State in the sectors of health care and education. The militias continue to loot funds and resources from the customs and tax authorities. They continue to loot the reserves of the Central Bank in order to fund the so-called Houthi popular committees and war efforts. They continue to fully drain economic and financial institutions.

The role of the private sector has diminished and, in its place, a sector of war merchants has been created. That has been enabled by capital being gained during the war by people who are taking advantage of opportunities to rob humanitarian aid in order to traffic fuel and weapons, loot public funds and impose mafia-style protection tactics on normal citizens who are being deprived of their monthly wages. School curriculums have not been safe from the onslaught. They have been replaced by extremist, racist curriculums that encourage a culture of conflict, violence and religious

sectarianism, which represents a clear reproach to the rest of the world. The Yemeni Government calls upon the international community to pressure the rebels to accept the Hudaydah initiative of Mr. Cheikh Ould Ahmed. There must be further initiatives in order to build confidence and mobilize the resources of the State and transfer tax and customs revenues at the Hudaydah port to the branch of the Central Bank in Hudaydah, in coordination with the branch in Aden. The Government has also pledged to cover the deficit accrued from paying the salaries of civil servants, especially in major sectors, such as education and health care and areas under militia control.

Our people have not been paid in a year and the militias refuse to cooperate with the Yemeni Government, the Special Envoy or international organizations, such as the World Bank, to pay the wages of our people. Faced with such a catastrophic situation, we call upon Member States to shoulder the responsibilities of the Yemeni crisis by pressuring the rebel forces to implement Security Council resolutions and offering real concessions, so that Yemen can be spared from further bloodshed. We must work towards allowing access to humanitarian aid for all Yemenis living under the control of rebel forces.

The Yemeni Government is most concerned with alleviating the suffering of our people. The Yemeni Government has repeatedly expressed its readiness to reopen the airport in Sana'a to humanitarian flights, provided that the militias exit the airport and hand over management duties of the airport to the professional staff that ran it before September 2014, under the supervision of the United Nations. We could open the airport in Sana'a today if the militias abided by those conditions.

Dealing with the Yemeni crisis from a humanitarian perspective, despite its importance, without paying due attention to the political perspective or working towards arriving at a sustainable political solution to the Yemeni issue, is simply an exercise in damage control that would prolong the war and suffering caused by the coup carried out by the Houthi-Saleh militias. Therefore, the Security Council's serious desire to deal with the humanitarian situation in Yemen is being put to the test, because it must help deal with the root causes of the crisis, as opposed to just treating the symptoms.

In conclusion, we highly value the great efforts being exerted by the international community and the Ambassadors of the Group of 18 to achieve security and stability in Yemen. I take this opportunity to reiterate the call made by President Hadi to the friends of Yemen to resume their efforts to implement peace and reconstruction in the country. On behalf of Yemen, I would like to renew our thanks and appreciation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, as well as to the rest of the States of our coalition, for their efforts to restore legitimacy, security and stability in Yemen and aid its people.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.